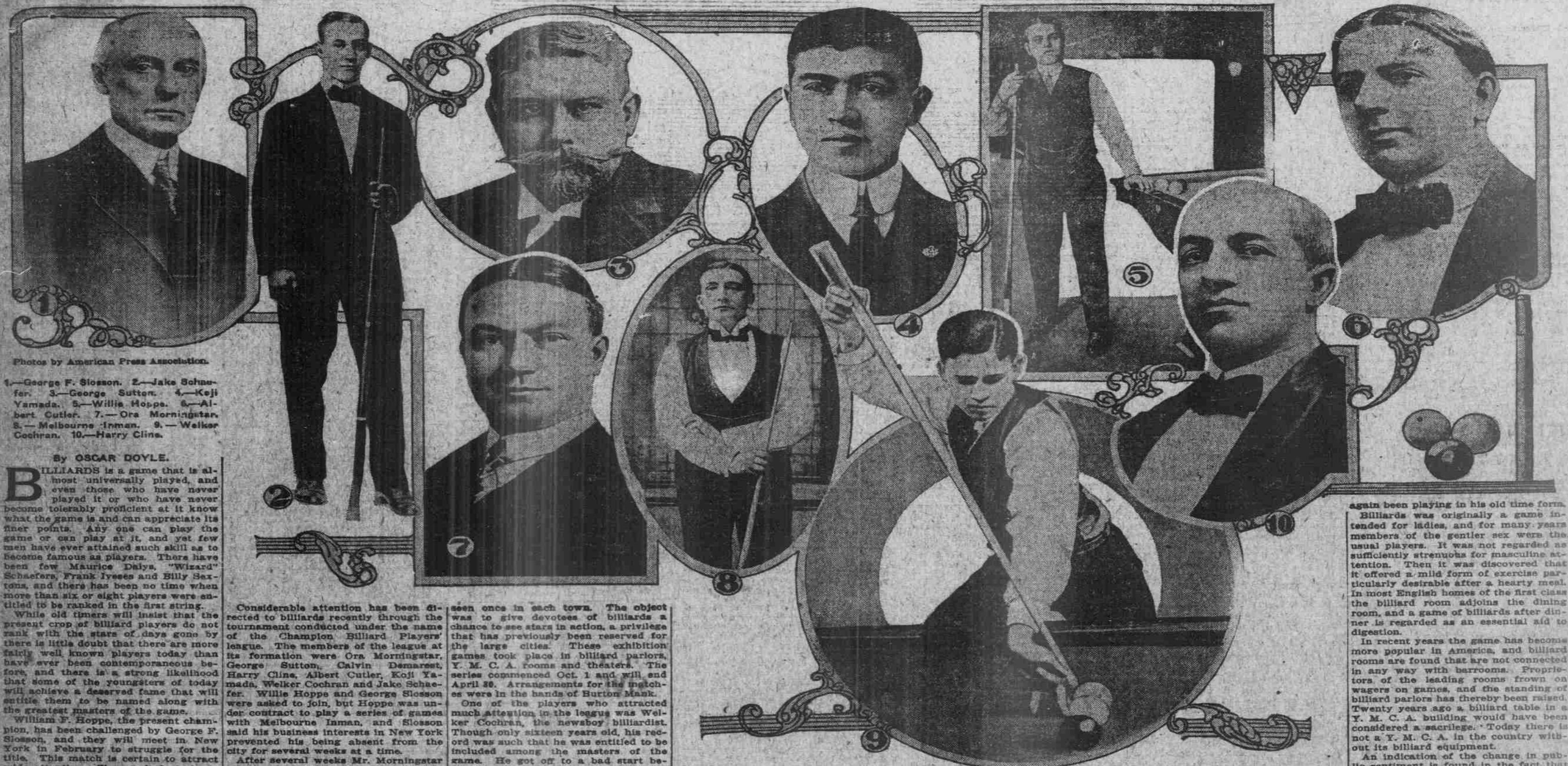


SPORTING WORLD AS SEEN BY EXPERTS

Billiard Stars Who Are Doing Much to Revive Interest In Game



Photos by American Press Association.

1—George F. Slosson. 2—Jake Schaefer. 3—George Sutton. 4—Koji Yamada. 5—Willie Hoppe. 6—Albert Cutler. 7—Ora Morningstar. 8—Melbourne Inman. 9—Walker Cochran. 10—Harry Cline.

By OSCAR DOYLE.

BILLIARDS is a game that is almost universally played, and even those who have never played it or who have never become tolerably proficient at it know what the game is and can appreciate its finer points. Only one can play the game or can play at it, and yet few men have ever attained such skill as to become famous as players. There have been few Maurice Delys, "Wizard" Schaefer, Frank James and Billy Bertram, and there has been no time when more than six or eight players were entitled to be ranked in the first string.

While old timers will insist that the present crop of billiard players do not rank with the stars of days gone by, there is little doubt that there are more fairly well known players today than have ever been contemporaries before, and there is a strong likelihood that some of the youngsters of today will achieve a deserved fame that will entitle them to be named along with the greatest masters of the game. William F. Hoppe, the present champion, has been challenged by George F. Slosson, and they will meet in New York in February to struggle for the title. This match is certain to attract playing the best game of his life, and he thinks he has a good chance to regain the championship. On the contrary, Hoppe has been playing in unusually good form in his tournament with Melbourne Inman, the English champion, and he was never in better shape to defend his crown.

Considerable attention has been directed to billiards recently through the tournament conducted under the name of the Champion Billiard Players' league. The members of the league at its formation were Ora Morningstar, George Sutton, Calvin Demarest, Harry Cline, Albert Cutler, Koji Yamada, Walker Cochran and Jake Schaefer. Willie Hoppe and George Slosson were asked to join, but Hoppe was under contract to play a series of games with Melbourne Inman, and Slosson said his business interests in New York prevented his being absent from the city for several weeks at a time.

After several weeks Mr. Morningstar withdrew from the league while he was in the lead in the percentage of games won, his wife's health being such that he wanted to take her to Arizona. His place was taken by Marcus Catton of Chicago.

Arrangements were made by which the members of the league were to play in 150 cities, each of the players to be

seen once in each town. The object was to give devotees of billiards a chance to see stars in action, a privilege that has previously been reserved for the large cities. These exhibition games took place in billiard parlors, Y. M. C. A. rooms and theaters. The series commenced Oct. 1 and will end April 30. Arrangements for the matches were in the hands of Hurton Bank.

One of the players who attracted much attention in the league was Walker Cochran, the newsboy billiardist. Though only sixteen years old, his record was such that he was entitled to be included among the masters of the game. He got off to a bad start because he had played for years on a perfect table, and he found it difficult to reach his stride when playing on a different table each night. Jake Schaefer, the son of "Wizard" Schaefer, had a similar difficulty. He is also young—barely twenty—and his lack of experience in tournaments was a handicap when he was playing against older men

who have gone through many campaigns.

Koji Yamada, the Japanese, recognized as one of the masters of the game, was also at a disadvantage when playing on imperfect tables. He plays a close game, and any player will tell you

that "nursing" the balls is impossible when the table is irregular.

Albert G. Cutler of Boston has been one of the most interesting players in the league. His facility for spectacular shots has made him a successful vaudeville star for several years, and specta-

tors were always repaid when they watched him perform.

George Sutton is perhaps the best known of the league players. A former champion, ill health had compelled his retirement for two years. His health has recently improved, and he has

again been playing in his old time form. Billiards was originally a game intended for ladies, and for many years members of the gentler sex were the usual players. It was not regarded as sufficiently strenuous for masculine attention. Then it was discovered that it offered a mild form of exercise particularly desirable after a hearty meal. In most English homes of the first class the billiard room adjoins the dining room, and a game of billiards after dinner is regarded as an essential aid to digestion.

In recent years the game has become more popular in America, and billiard rooms are found that are not connected in any way with beer parlors. Proprietors of the leading rooms frown on wagers on games, and the standing of billiard parlors has thereby been raised. Twenty years ago a billiard table in a Y. M. C. A. building would have been considered a sacrilege. Today there is not a Y. M. C. A. in the country without its billiard equipment.

An indication of the change in public sentiment is found in the fact that "pool" is no longer played. It is now called "pocket billiards." This change has been brought about by the fact that "pool" is a designation for places in which bets are made on horse races. There is a good deal in a name, and the dropping of the word pool has therefore been a wise move.

National League Pitching Averages

OFFICIAL averages for the pitchers in the National league tell the story of the failure of the New York Giants last season. Ranking the pitchers according to their effectiveness against batters instead of the "games won and lost" credits is an improvement, that Secretary Heydler is responsible for. For several years fans have been accustomed to see the names of Mathewson, Marquard and Tressau near the top, but they are missing now, and that is why the Giants failed to win their fourth pennant.

Demaree and Marquard, who were stars in 1913, failed to win half their starts this season. Marquard's record is 12 victories and 22 defeats. Demaree won 19 and lost 17. There lies the answer to the defeat of John McGraw's ambition to lead a four time winner.

No New York pitcher ranks among the ten leading box artists in the National league. Tressau is No. 11. Zabel of Chicago ranks seventh, but he pitched only 125 innings against Tressau's 322.

Willie Doak of St. Louis had fewer runs earned off his twisting than any other pitcher. Doak pitched 256 innings, and opposing batters scored only 1.72 earned runs in every nine innings. The Boston champions had two wins—James and Rudolph—who allowed less than an average of three runs per nine inning game. The percentage of earned runs off Tressau's delivery was 2.38 for each nine innings.

Tressau stands all alone among the leaders. Only he and Mathewson are credited with more victories than defeats. And Matty has dropped back to thirty-second place, being ranked by several men who could not win for their clubs last season. The sneaky soaked "Big Six" for an average of

three earned runs every game. The wonderful arm is evidently weakening, but the brain isn't.

Matty passed only 23 batters in 312 innings and still leads the league in control. Alexander of Philadelphia was the strikeout king. He fanned 214 in 355 innings. Tressau breezed 138 in 322 rounds, so his percentage of whiffs is practically the same as Alexander's.

James, Tressau and Cheney—all spitball pitchers—were most liberal with bases on balls. Cheney was the worst of the trio, as he passed 140 men in 311 innings. Tressau walked 128 in 322 innings and James 115 in 322.

Marty O'Toole, who has been returned to the Pirates, was the "hardest hit" pitcher with the exception of Cochran of Boston, and Cochran pitched only one full game. O'Toole whiffed 172 rounds and was poked for 4.57 earned runs every nine of them.

The Cubs drew the most free passes, working the pitchers for 401 strolls in 138 games. The average of 2.91 per game. The Giants had an average of 3.37. The Giants have the unenviable distinction of striking out more than any other team. They bested the breeses 479 times, for an average of 3.97 per game.

Wilbur Good of the Cubs fanned 74 times in 154 games, but the cream puff honors should go to Bert Niehoff, who struck out 77 times in 142 games. Graydon of the Phillies whiffed 72 times, but did a lot of damage when he landed.

Miller Huggins, who holds the record for bases on balls accepted in a season, worked the pitchers for 108 compliments in 148 games. Sater walked 94 times in 153 games, and George Burns stroled 59 times in 154 games. Johnny Evers did not forgotten how to their clubs last season. The sneaky soaked "Big Six" for an average of

COOMBS WON LONGEST GAME EVER PITCHED BY MAJOR LEAGUE TWIRLER

JACK COOMBS has the honor of pitching the longest game ever played in the majors. Sept. 1, 1906, he worked twenty-four innings against Boston and came out on top by the score of 4 to 1.

The year 1910 was a big one for the "Big Man" of the Athletics. He won thirty-one games out of forty starts, a percentage of 77.5. In thirteen of these games he whitewashed his opponents. At one stretch during the season he went "forty-six" consecutive innings without allowing a run to be scored on his delivery. Aug. 4 he worked a sensational sixteen inning game against Chicago, Ed Walsh opposing him in the box for the White Sox. Neither team was able to make a run in the sixteen innings, so masterly did both pitchers work. Coombs was the more effective of the two, allowing only three hits in the sixteen innings. Sept. 21 he pitched an eleven inning 0 to 0 affair against Cleveland, only three hits being made by the Naps.

In the world's series of 1910 he worked three times in six days against the Chicago Cubs and scored a trio of victories over Chance's great team. He has yet to lose a game in a world's series. He beat the Cubs 9 to 3, 12 to 5 and 7 to 2.

MANY KILLED IN BASEBALL.

THIRTY-FIVE deaths and 918 injuries were caused by baseball during 1914. Of the players who died from injuries 29 were hit by pitched balls, 5 were struck by bats, 4 were in collisions, 4 overexerted themselves, 1 was hurt sliding to a base and 1 was killed in a fight. Injuries to amateur players are classified as follows:

Broken limbs, 314; concussion of brain, 18; fractured skulls, 23; paralysis, 4; sprains, 27; spoked, 26; fractures, 17; dislocations, 7; torn ligaments, 10. Players hurt in the minor leagues: number 118; American league, 69; National league, 61; Federal league, 56, and college teams, 2.

WHAT WAR HAS DONE TO A GOLF COURSE IN BELGIUM

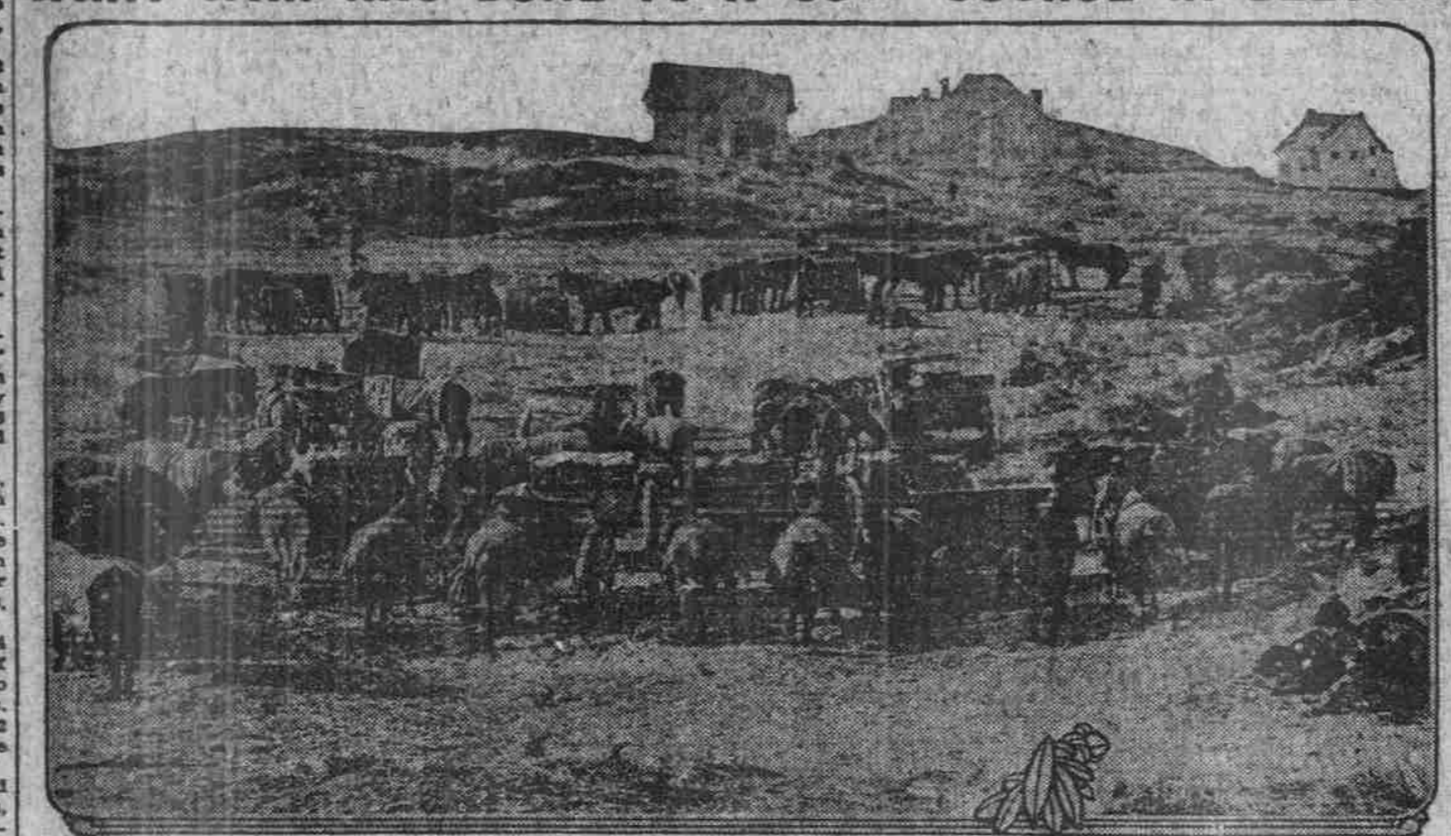


Photo by American Press Association.

THIS shows a portion of the Lombard golf course at Nieuport Bains, Belgium. The course, located in the sand dunes, is reached by tramcar from Ostend and Nieuport Bains and was a popular links until Germans, Belgians, French and English troops began disputing possession of the country. The golf players promptly went away from there. Gutta percha balls, however dangerous when propelled by a driver wielded by powerful arms, are of little use in answering the remarks of shrapnel, and soldiers have a habit of turning rapid fire guns loose without giving any warning about of "Fore!" Golf enthusiasts, when they see what war has done to this Belgian links, will declare that if General Sherman was correctly quoted he was entirely too conservative.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. FLYNN

"I AIN'T the greatest fighter in the world," said James Flynn recently, "but I ain't no fool either. I've had many a vacation in about sixteen years. I have to work regularly because I never get much money for what I do. I never did get a whole lot of money for my jobs. The most I ever got in a single chunk was the \$7,000 that was paid me the night I whiffed Carl Morris in Madison Square Garden."

"I got less than \$2,000 the first time I fought Jack Johnson and lost money the second time I met him. I guess champions are unlucky to me in more ways than the one you're thinkin' of. It cost me \$2,500 to run my trainin' stable at Las Vegas the time of the second fight, and I never got a nickel back. But then I was takin' a gambler's chance, so I didn't kick. I thought I could lick him—I honestly thought I could. "At one time or another I've thought

I could beat most all of those big guys. Mainly I didn't. Once in awhile I did, but mainly I didn't. I fought 'em all just the same—Jack ("Twin") Sullivan, George Gardner, Jack Root, both the Barrys, Kaufmann, Langford, Burns, Payke, Jack O'Brien—all of 'em. I've taken many a beatin', and I've given some. Maybe beatin's I've took over-balance the beatin's I dished out—I never weighed 'em up very carefully, but I've always tried to give a crowd a run for its dough."

"I was over in Boston not long ago, and I was introduced to a guy who says, 'Are you Jim Flynn, the fighter?' I says, 'No, I'm Jim Flynn, the gentleman boxer.' Well, says the guy, 'you're all right, at that. You've give me many a good show, and I'm for you. Say, he went on, do you know why you always pack the houses when you appear?' "I swelled up right away 'Why, no,' I says, 'shovin' out my chest, I don't

think I ever figured it out, but now that you ask me I suppose it's because I always put up a good fight. I suppose that's why I always pack the people in."

"No," says the guy, "that ain't just exactly it. The reason you draw so well is because half the people go to see you get killed and the other half to bury you."

FRED CLARKE WANTS TO RETIRE

FRED CLARKE has expressed a desire to retire as leader of the Pittsburgh Pirates, but it is very doubtful if Barney Dreyfuss will permit him to do so. For several years Clarke has wanted to get out of baseball and devote his entire time to his big farm in Kansas. Fred is a farmer at heart, and that kind of life is no plaything to him, but in the past Dreyfuss has been able to persuade Clarke to stick with the Pirates "for just one more year," and he may be as successful again.

Branch Rickey Sees Coming Star In Outfielder Williams

THAT Gus Williams, who right fields for the Browns, will be one of the bright particular stars of the 1915 season is a prediction of Branch Rickey. Rickey is the man who made a real ball player of Gus, and, according to the Browns' manager, Gus hasn't stopped yet.

After Rickey had put Gus through a month's preparing in Florida last March the big outfielder showed form that convinced the fans that he was just about the most improved ball player in the league. Gus fell down a bit in his hitting, finishing the season around the 260 mark, but in every other department of the game he showed such improvement over his 1914 form that he didn't look like the same ball tosser.

It may not be generally known, but Rickey keeps tabs on everything his players do on the ball field. Branch's booklet shows the following facts about Williams:

That he dropped only one fly ball during the entire season.

That he was charged with six errors

all year, but was responsible for only two, the misplays coming when Gus let ground balls trickie through his legs.

That seven other regular outfielders in the league hit below Williams.

That he was the second best base stealer to Fritz Masei in the American league.

That other Browns stole more bases than Williams, but Gus was more successful in stealing on fewer attempts.

That Williams is the only outfielder in the league who has stolen more than any other player in the league. The Browns' manager looks for the burly fellow to steal a greater percentage of bases than any man in the league if he is able to improve his batting about twenty points.

Rickey is not predicting any high berth for the Browns next season, but is better pleased with the outlook than he was a year ago at this time. He says he believes that not only Williams, but Clarence Walker, Derrill Pratt and Dr. John Lavan will profit by their past experience and will show improvement on the diamond.

RUNNERS PASS EACH OTHER IN PRIZE BONEHEAD PLAY

EVERY so often peculiar plays crop up in the history of our great game, so to speak, national pastime. Some of them are funny and others serious, inasmuch as the latter kind often result in a player being made the "goat." The following tale is of one of the peculiar plays of the funny species that cropped up in the Central association last season:

Waterloo was playing in Muscatine, and Wetzel, Muscatine's right fielder, was on first and Sours of the same team at bat. Sours gave the hit and run sign, and Wetzel started down with the pitch. Sours hit a high pop fly, and just as he reached second base Yetsell thought he saw Hill, Waterloo's left fielder, reaching up to spear the ball.

Without waiting to see whether or not he made the catch Wetzel turned to beat it back for first. In the meantime the ball had soared over Hill's head, and Sours turned first and kept on going to second. Wetzel and Sours whizzed by each other at full speed, going in opposite directions. When Sours reached second he thought he had made a mistake about seeing the ball fall safe and started back to first. Simultaneously Wetzel saw Hill chasing the sphere, and he again legged it to second, and once more they passed each other on the dead run. The ultimate result was that a hit that should have been good for a triple and a score went for a single. It is plays like this that keep the fans in the little circuits in good humor.

MEREDITH LOWERS A RUNNING RECORD

JAMES E. (TED) MEREDITH, the Penn flier, wearing the silks of the Meadowbrook Athletic association, recently lowered the American record for 500 yards in the First Regiment armory, Newark. Three clockers snapped their watches on him in 1 minute flat, one second better than the old record.

TOD SLOANE IS RED CROSS

TOD SLOANE, the famous ex-jockey, who invented the monkey stride in the saddle and who has won many of the world's best horse racing prizes, is nowadays seen about Paris wearing the Red Cross armlet. He has volunteered as a driver for the French Red Cross and occasionally drives an automobile about Paris or to one of the railway stations to meet a train of wounded. He is very proud of his armlet.